

Supplemental Report 1

21st Century Charter School Detailed Performance Assessment and Profile



302 S. Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46225
(317) 524-3750

<http://www.21ccharter.org>

▪ Grades served in 2003-04	K-7
▪ Enrollment in 2003-04	158 students
▪ Grades served at capacity	K-12
▪ Maximum school size at capacity	240 students

This supplemental report presents information about the school in three sections:

- 21st Century Charter School's Students (enrollment and demographic information)
- Performance at 21st Century Charter School
- Detailed Description of 21st Century Charter School's Programs and Activities (as provided by the school)

21st Century Charter School's Students

Figure S1-1. Enrollment and demand for the 21st Century Charter School

	Number of students
Maximum possible enrollment in 2003-04, pursuant to charter	160
Number of students enrolled in 2003-04 ¹	158
Number of students on waiting list as of spring 2004 for 2004-05 school year ²	100

¹Source: Indiana Department of Education website, based on school's Pupil Enrollment Count reported every October.

²Source: School self-report of data, as of spring 2004. 2004 was the first time this information was collected in this manner; therefore, waiting list information for the 2003-04 school year is not available.

Figure S1-2. 21st Century Charter School student composition

Gender ¹		Race & Ethnicity ¹				Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch ¹	Special Education ²	Limited English Proficient ³
Male	Female	African-American	Hispanic	Caucasian	Other			
58.9%	41.1%	66.5%	3.2%	22.2%	8.2%	46.2%	17.1%	0.0%

Note: See main report for comparative data.

¹Source: Indiana Department of Education website, based on school's Pupil Enrollment Count reported every October.

²Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Exceptional Learners, count reported December 2003.

³Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Language and Minority Programs, count reported March 2004.

Performance at 21st Century Charter School

The section below describes 21st Century Charter School's performance over its second school year by addressing the common performance indicators in the Mayor's Charter School Performance Framework. The complete Performance Framework may be viewed on-line at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2004/>.

In some areas, this section also provides information about the school's performance in 2002-03 as compared to its performance in 2003-04. For additional information on how performance has changed, view the *2003 Accountability Report on Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools*, also available on-line at the website listed above.

Is the educational program a success?

Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?

Performance on the statewide assessment. Figure S1-3 displays the percentage of 21st Century 3rd, 5th, and 6th graders who received passing scores on ISTEP+ examinations in the fall of 2003 and, where applicable, the percentage passing in 2002. It also shows the results for Indianapolis Public Schools and all Indiana public schools. While 2002 data are provided, it is not possible to use these results to measure individual students' progress over time because each grade's test results pertain to different children in 2002 versus 2003. Fall 2003 was the first time

21st Century students currently enrolled in grades 3, 5, and 6 took the ISTEP+, and thus data on how these same students previously performed on ISTEP+ are not available. In the future, as ISTEP+ is administered in all grades, the Mayor's Office will be able to determine how much progress over time 21st Century students are making on these tests.

Figure S1-3. Percentage of students in 21st Century Charter School ("21C"), Indianapolis Public Schools ("IPS"), and Indiana ("IN") passing ISTEP+ tests at the *beginning* of the fall semester^{1,2}

	English			Math			Both (English & Math)			Science		
	21C	IPS	IN	21C	IPS	IN	21C	IPS	IN	21C	IPS	IN
3 rd Graders												
2003	40%	62%	74%	30%	65%	71%	30%	52%	63%			
2002	63%	58%	72%	31%	57%	67%	19%	44%	59%			
5 th Graders ³												
2003										6%	32%	61%
6 th Graders												
2003	52%	43%	69%	33%	44%	72%	29%	31%	62%			
2002	50%	40%	69%	22%	32%	67%	22%	25%	59%			

Source: Indiana Department of Education.

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

¹Since 2003 is the first year these students have taken the ISTEP+, it is not possible to use these results as a measure of student progress at the 21st Century Charter School.

²Blank areas denote that the applicable grade was not tested in the particular subject area.

³Since 2003 was the first year Indiana students took the ISTEP+ in 5th grade science, historical data are not available.

Adequate Yearly Progress. As required by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, the Indiana Department of Education has determined Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for all Indiana schools, including charter schools in operation during the 2002-03 school year. The Department determines whether each school makes AYP based on the percentage of students passing the English and mathematics ISTEP+ tests. In addition, each elementary and middle school must make AYP by raising or maintaining high attendance rates, and each high school must raise or maintain high graduation rates. 21st Century did not receive an AYP rating because it tested fewer than 30 students total in 2002. As the school grows, the total number of students tested in comparison years will increase, so AYP determinations will be made in the future.

Are students making substantial gains over time?

Test score analysis. 21st Century Charter School administered the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exam to its students in grades two through six in spring 2003, and in grades two through seven in fall 2003 and spring 2004. However, due to technical difficulties, the fall 2003 scores were not recorded. A spring-to-spring test score analysis is therefore presented for this school, whereas a fall-to-spring analysis is presented for the other Mayor-sponsored charter schools discussed in this report. The analysis also does not include 2nd graders because the MAP was not administered to those students in the spring 2003 as they were in the 1st grade. Each number in Figure S1-4 indicates the percentage change in the average test score achieved in a particular grade and subject from spring to spring. For example, the +8.4 in the first row indicates that the average reading score for students who were 3rd graders in 2003-04 was 8.4% higher in spring 2004 than when those same students were 2nd graders in spring 2003.

Figure S1-4. Percentage change in average NWEA MAP scores between spring 2003 and spring 2004 at 21st Century Charter School

	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade	6 th Grade	7 th Grade
Reading	+8.4	+5.2	+2.4	+2.0	+2.4
Math	+7.0	+4.9	+5.2	+3.4	+3.5
Language	+7.4	+4.9	+1.5	+1.6	+1.0

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: Grade levels indicated are the students' grade levels during the 2003-04 school year.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Figure S1-4 shows that students made progress, on average, between spring 2003 and spring 2004 in all grades and all subjects tested. But how large were these gains? Analysts at New American Schools (NAS) used two methods to answer that question. First, they compared the progress of 21st Century's students to that of other students in Indiana and nationally who took the same exams at the same points in their academic careers ("comparative gains"). Second, they determined whether students' gains were large enough for them to reach proficiency by the end of eighth grade ("sufficient gains").

Comparative Gains. Since the NWEA MAP is a national standardized test, we can ask the following question: if we ranked all the students in Indiana and across the country who took the NWEA MAP, where would *21st Century students stand on average* in those rankings?

Figures S1-5 and S1-6 provide the answer. For example, the first row of Figure S1-5 shows how 2nd graders at 21st Century performed in reading. In spring 2003, on average 3rd graders at 21st Century scored as well as or better than 17% of all students in Indiana in reading. We call this number, 17, 21st Century's "Spring 2003 Average Percentile" for 3rd graders in reading. The next column shows that by spring 2004, on average 21st Century 3rd graders performed as well as or better than 21% of all students in Indiana. The school's "Spring 2004 Average Percentile" was 21. What does this mean? It means that, on average, 21st Century's 3rd graders *moved up in the statewide ranking* in reading between spring 2003 and spring 2004. So on the right side of Figure S1-5, we indicate that 21st Century students "gained ground" versus students in Indiana. Figure S1-6 displays the same information, but compares students' performance to their peers *nationally*.

As displayed in Figures S1-5 and S1-6, it is evident that 21st Century students, on average, gained ground on their Indiana and national peers in some grades and subjects, but stayed even or lost ground in several others. The fact that students, on average, lost ground in some areas does not mean that these students did not progress in these grades and subjects – they progressed, as Figure S1-4 illustrates, but not as much as their peers in Indiana and nationally.

Figure S1-5. INDIANA comparison: Academic progress of 21st Century Charter School students, spring 2003 through spring 2004

Grade/ subject		Spring 2003 Average Percentile	Spring 2004 Average Percentile	Gained ground vs. students in Indiana	Stayed even with students in Indiana	Lost ground vs. students in Indiana
3 rd Grade	Reading	17	21	✓		
	Math	16	14			✓
	Language	16	18	✓		
4 th Grade	Reading	33	41	✓		
	Math	23	28	✓		
	Language	27	39	✓		
5 th Grade	Reading	16	16		✓	
	Math	7	11	✓		
	Language	10	7			✓
6 th Grade	Reading	24	21			✓
	Math	24	32	✓		
	Language	28	26			✓
7 th Grade	Reading	29	34	✓		
	Math	15	25	✓		
	Language	26	26		✓	

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: Conclusions about whether students gained or lost ground were based on simple comparisons of spring percentiles. Grade levels indicated are the students' grade levels during the 2003-04 school year.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Figure S1-6. NATIONAL comparison: Academic progress of 21st Century Charter School students, spring 2003 through spring 2004

Grade/ subject		Spring 2003 Average Percentile	Spring 2004 Average Percentile	Gained ground vs. students nationally	Stayed even with students nationally	Lost ground vs. students nationally
3 rd Grade	Reading	21	26	✓		
	Math	21	23	✓		
	Language	24	27	✓		
4 th Grade	Reading	39	46	✓		
	Math	33	35	✓		
	Language	39	49	✓		
5 th Grade	Reading	22	20			✓
	Math	12	16	✓		
	Language	17	12			✓
6 th Grade	Reading	29	27			✓
	Math	30	40	✓		
	Language	37	35			✓
7 th Grade	Reading	34	37	✓		
	Math	22	29	✓		
	Language	35	32			✓

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: Conclusions about whether students gained or lost ground were based on simple comparisons of spring percentiles. Grade levels indicated are the students' grade levels during the 2003-04 school year.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Sufficient Gains. Are the students in this school making *sufficient gains* toward becoming proficient? It is not enough to know whether students made a year's worth of progress between 2003 and 2004. Some students, since they are starting behind, need to make *more* than a year's worth of progress in order to become proficient by the end of eighth grade. What proportion of the school's students is making the gains they need to make?

To find out, analysts projected each student's *future* gain based on the gain he or she achieved between spring 2003 and spring 2004 on the MAP exam. If the student continued to gain at that rate, would he or she be proficient by the end of the 8th grade? If so, he or she made "sufficient gains." Based on this analysis, NAS calculated the percentage of students who made sufficient gains in each subject and grade.

Figure S1-7 displays the results. For example, 100% of students who were 3rd graders in 2003-04 made sufficient gains in reading. That is, if these 3rd graders continue learning at the rate they did during this period, 100% of them will be proficient by the end of 8th grade. Of note, based on current gains, less than 40% of students in 5th grade will be proficient in math by the end of 8th grade.

Figure S1-7. Percentage of 21st Century Charter School students achieving sufficient gains to become proficient by the end of 8th Grade, spring 2003 through spring 2004

	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade	6 th Grade	7 th Grade
Reading	100.0%	100.0%	88.9%	84.6%	82.4%
Math	80.0%	81.8%	37.5%	78.6%	58.8%
Language	80.0%	76.9%	50.0%	69.2%	70.6%

Source: "Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data 2004," prepared by New American Schools, Alexandria, VA, 2004.

Note: Grade levels indicated are the students' grade levels during the 2003-04 school year.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

Is the organization effective and well-run?

Is the school in sound fiscal health? The Mayor's Office commissioned a review of each school's finances. Reviews by the outside accounting firm revealed that 21st Century Charter School was managing its financial practices satisfactorily, with no significant problems. A summary of the school's finances, including financial statements, appears in Supplemental Report 6.

Only six percent of parents and no school staff surveyed at 21st Century Charter School reported they are dissatisfied with the school's finances.

Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong? The school's attendance rate was 96.1% in 2003-04 (see Figure S1-8). Of parents surveyed, 70% expressed their intention to continue to enroll their children in the school as long as the school serves students their children's age, while 22% reported they were unsure. On a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), parents on average rated their likelihood of recommending the school to other parents or guardians as a good place to attend at 4.10. Staff members on average rated their likelihood at 4.15 on the same question.

Figure S1-8. 21st Century Charter School attendance rate in 2003-04 school year

	Attendance rate
21 st Century Charter School	96.1%
Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS)	94.1%
All Indiana Public Schools	95.9%

Source: Indiana Department of Education website.

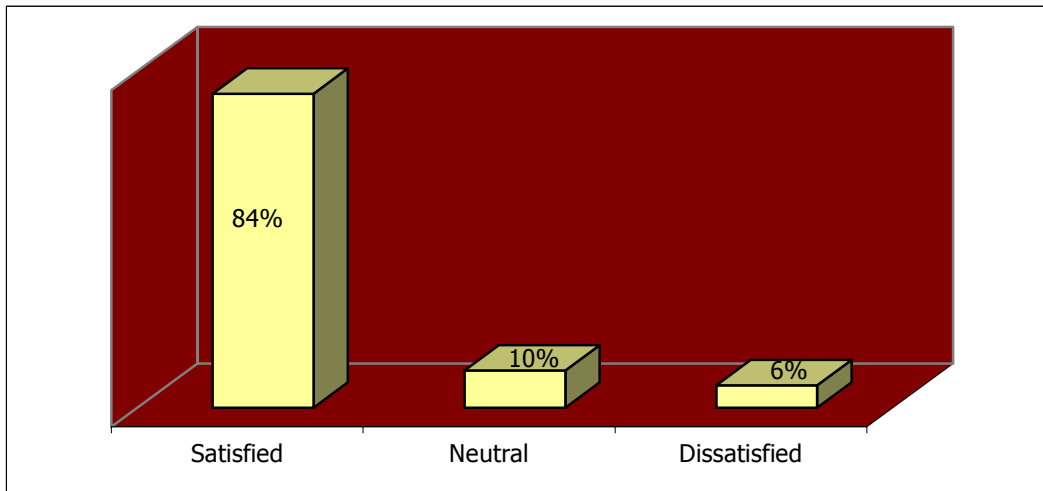
Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight? Governance reviews conducted by the Mayor's Office showed that the 21st Century Charter School's Board is actively involved in the school's decision-making and in driving the vision for the school. Board members have specific areas of expertise that are beneficial to the school and they freely offer advice and ask compelling questions regarding those areas and others. The school's administrators encourage Board members' input and feedback during discussion and are receptive to the Board's recommendations. The school's administrators also showed a desire to engage the Board more in the school through Board development activities and more frequent meetings (i.e., changing from quarterly to monthly meetings). Overall, the 21st Century Charter School Board is using the members' expertise effectively to ensure that the school is successful.

In its review of the 21st Century Charter School Board of Directors, the expert site visit team found that "Board members have expertise related to managing budgets, governance and human resources, and public school administration. A review of minutes and a visit to a Board meeting indicated that the meetings are agenda-driven and address routine and new business. There were substantive discussions and appropriate procedures used to make decisions."

Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school? Figure S1-9 shows how 21st Century parents responded to a question about their overall satisfaction with the charter school. As compared to the 2003 survey results, the percentage of parents who reported overall satisfaction holds steady at 84% and the percentage of parents who reported they were dissatisfied with the charter school has decreased from 7% in 2003 to 6% in 2004. Figure S1-10 shows the percentage of parents who were satisfied with specific aspects of the school as well as the average satisfaction rate for each aspect.

According to the expert site visit team, "parents report that 21st Century was 'different in every way' from other schools at which they have experience, particularly citing the school's smaller classes, more structured environment, diversity, accessibility to computers, and 'awesome' teachers." The site team also noted that "parents expressed high levels of commitment to the school and to its mission and reported that the school was meeting or exceeding their expectations. Parents reported that having an individualized, variably paced curriculum was an important reason for their decision to enroll their children in the school." The site team further reported that "parents identified the need for increased parent involvement" in the school.

Figure S1-9. Overall parent satisfaction with 21st Century Charter School



Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. "Satisfied" includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

"Dissatisfied" includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

Figure S1-10. Parent satisfaction with features at 21st Century Charter School

School Feature	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
School size	4.55	97%	3%	0%
Class size	4.26	88%	6%	6%
Length of school day	4.36	90%	6%	4%
Length of school year	4.12	80%	12%	9%
Ability of school to fulfill mission	3.99	75%	15%	9%
Individualized attention	3.87	71%	16%	13%
Academic standards/expectations	4.16	83%	10%	7%
Curriculum	4.22	88%	7%	4%
Teaching quality	4.07	75%	16%	9%
Instructional quality, language arts	3.84	70%	17%	13%
Instructional quality, mathematics	3.97	74%	14%	10%
Materials to support curriculum	3.75	65%	23%	10%
Innovation in teaching practices	3.91	68%	22%	7%
Computers and other technology	4.22	84%	9%	7%
Classroom management/behavior	3.64	59%	26%	14%
Communication from the school	3.81	68%	21%	12%
Parent information about students	3.99	78%	12%	10%
Accessibility/openness to parents	4.28	84%	13%	3%
Parent participation opportunities	4.36	90%	6%	4%
Parent involvement	3.99	72%	22%	6%
Teacher/student school pride	4.03	77%	14%	7%
Relationship with local community	4.06	70%	22%	1%
Extracurricular activities	3.49	49%	36%	13%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1= very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?

During the 2003-04 school year, 21st Century Charter School improved communication, especially among the primary administrators, by clearly designating the responsibilities of each position; this improvement has led to increased effectiveness in the school. The governance review conducted by the Mayor's Office in 2003-04 found that the school has clearly delegated the responsibilities of organizational and academic leadership among the chief executive officer (CEO), the chief academic officer (CAO), and the principal. This division of responsibilities is advantageous for the school because it requires specific positions to be accountable for particular aspects of the school. The CEO ensures compliance with the charter agreement and all state and federal regulations by maintaining all of the necessary documentation for the school. The CAO supervises the overall academic program, including school-wide assessments (internal and external) and accountability planning. The principal manages the day-to-day operations of the school, including interactions with students and teachers. With the CEO coordinating all of the organizational tasks for the school, the CAO and principal are freed to focus on the school's academic program. The school has satisfactorily maintained the compliance binder, which contains all of the school's governance,

management, and organizational documents and is reviewed by the Mayor's Office on a monthly basis.

The expert site visit team reported that "overall 21st Century Charter School is effective and well-run. There are clear roles and responsibilities and effective communication among the principal, chief academic officer and chief executive officer." The site team commended the school's administration on its high level of effectiveness. More than nine in ten staff members reported that they were satisfied by the leadership provided by their school's administration. Of parents surveyed, eight in ten reported they were satisfied with the people running 21st Century Charter School.

Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations related to: organizational structure and governance obligations; physical plants that are safe and conducive to learning; fair and appropriate pupil enrollment processes; reasonable and safe transportation options available to eligible students; and legal obligations related to access and services to special needs and English as a second language students?

21st Century Charter School satisfactorily met its obligations in 2003-04 in complying with relevant laws and regulations and in providing access to students across Indianapolis. Neither the Mayor's Office's internal systems nor the expert site visit team indicated any significant concerns related to these obligations. Figure S1-11 displays parent and staff survey responses to questions about school operations.

Figure S1-11. Parent and school staff satisfaction with 21st Century Charter School operations

School Feature	Parents				School Staff			
	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
Services for special needs students ^{4,5}	3.50	56%	19%	25%	3.33	33%	44%	22%
School leadership	4.12	80%	12%	7%	4.23	92%	8%	0%
School finances	3.95	59%	20%	6%	4.00	77%	15%	0%
Safety	4.32	88%	6%	4%	4.46	100%	0%	0%
School facilities	4.26	84%	12%	3%	3.46	54%	23%	23%
Enrollment process	4.20	86%	13%	1%	4.00	77%	23%	0%
Transportation ⁶	4.24	89%	5%	5%	4.15	85%	15%	0%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents and staffs administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

⁴Special needs students include those for whom English is a second language or who have disabilities, academic difficulties, etc.

⁵Only parents of children with special needs in the charter school responded to this question. Only staff members with instructional responsibilities and students with special needs in their classroom responded to this question.

⁶Only parents whose children used the school's transportation services in the 2003-04 school year responded to this question.

Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders? The expert site visit team found that all students, parents and teachers participating in focus groups articulated a similar mission – to provide an individualized learning experience for all students. According to the site visit team, these constituents reported that the computer-based A+ Learning System is the key vehicle for achieving the mission. However, the site team also noted that this year “students were observed to also be spending significant time engaged in teacher-led instruction and small-group and project-based work....” The team suggested that the school “might consider ways in which...the learning experience innovations might become more explicit and prominent in the identity of and language about 21st Century Charter School,” moving away from the common belief that technology is the key learning vehicle. All staff members surveyed reported that they were aware of the goals of the school, and 77% believed the goals were being met across the school “very well” or “fairly well.”

Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade? In 2003, the site team reported strong technological support for the school's computer-based A+ Learning System but recommended additional curriculum and classroom support. In 2004, the team reported the following: “One positive change noted in 21st Century classrooms in June 2004 (compared to spring 2003) is that the A+ curriculum is being enhanced in a variety of ways including teacher-led instruction, project-based learning, community activities, and special classes in music, character education, and physical education. Students describe, and their work products demonstrate, that they are engaged in and enjoy these activities and that they are developing skills such as writing, basic research, and presenting.” The team also noted that the technology and instruments available for music instruction are “exemplary.”

Teachers reported to the site visit team that certain groups of students – “1) students who are not reading, 2) students who have low levels of self-motivation, 3) students who are easily distracted, and 4) students with some learning disabilities” – experience difficulties learning using the computerized A+ curriculum. As a result, the team suggested that the school provide teachers with “...time to collaborate on teaching and learning issues, especially for these groups of students.” The team also recommended the development of a process for teachers to “...identify and prioritize their needs for supplementary materials.” As Figure S1-12 illustrates, only about one-third of 21st Century staff members reported satisfaction with the materials to support the curriculum at their charter school.

Figure S1-12. School staff satisfaction with features at 21st Century Charter School

School Feature	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
School size	4.38	92%	8%	0%
Class size	3.92	85%	0%	15%
Length of school day	2.77	23%	23%	54%
Length of school year	3.38	46%	31%	23%
Ability of school to fulfill mission	3.85	62%	38%	0%
Individualized attention	3.54	54%	31%	15%
Academic standards/expectations	4.08	77%	23%	0%
Curriculum	3.69	69%	23%	8%
Teaching quality	4.23	85%	15%	0%
Instructional quality, language arts	3.69	54%	31%	15%
Instructional quality, mathematics	3.92	69%	8%	15%
Materials to support curriculum	2.92	31%	31%	38%
Innovation in teaching practices	4.46	100%	0%	0%
Computers and other technology	4.15	92%	8%	0%
Classroom management/behavior	3.23	46%	31%	23%
Communication from the school	3.92	77%	8%	15%
Parent information about students	4.42	85%	8%	0%
Accessibility/openness to parents	4.08	85%	8%	8%
Parent participation opportunities	4.08	85%	8%	8%
Parent involvement	2.54	15%	23%	62%
Teacher/student school pride	3.85	62%	38%	0%
Relationship with local community	3.62	38%	62%	0%
Extracurricular activities	3.38	31%	62%	8%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school staffs administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Satisfaction percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and "don't know" responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include "don't know" responses.

²Includes "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses.

³Includes "very dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" responses.

Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?

As Figures S1-10 and S1-12 illustrate, 93% of parents and 100% of staff members reported they were neutral about or satisfied with the academic standards for their students. The expert site visit team reported that "21st Century makes extensive use of a variety of assessments to inform and improve instruction.... Administrators, teachers, parents and students are informed and knowledgeable about the level at which students are working and about how to find additional information about student learning...." The team further reported that teachers and administrators "talk knowledgeably about A+ assessments and about where different students are in the A+ curriculum, indicating they use A+ assessments to inform and guide daily decisions about student learning." Comparing its most recent findings to a visit earlier in the school year, the site team found that "students in focus groups and in classrooms demonstrate an understanding of how their learning is assessed by the A+ program. In June 2004, as compared to January 2004, students were much more focused and verbal about benchmarks and standards associated with their A+ work." The site team observed some students in classrooms to be guessing on A+ mastery tests rather than demonstrating knowledge about the subject matter and suggests that the

school “develop policies and procedures to ensure that A+ mastery tests certify rigorous and high-quality learning.”

Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success? According to the expert site visit team, “the overall climate of the school is conducive to student and staff success.” The team reported that “one noteworthy change implemented in 2003-04 was the use of student advisories.... The site team believes that such advisories will have a positive impact on students’ sense of belonging in the school and, thus, will enhance the overall climate of the school.” The team further noted several other changes it feels will strengthen the learning experience and bring the school closer to attaining its mission: “teaching assignments aligned to certification areas versus teaching all subjects in one grade; increased use of teacher-led instruction and project-based learning; increased student time spent on developing core competencies, especially writing and speaking; enhancement of the Spanish program; and development of a new report card format which is reported by parents to be easy to understand.”

All constituents with whom the site team spoke report “...the school to be safe and parents report that their students are respected and treated well;” the site team also observed staff members to be respectful of one another and of students. As Figure S1-11 shows, nearly nine in ten parents and all staff members surveyed reported their satisfaction with school safety. Additionally, on a scale of one (very dissatisfied) to five (very satisfied), parents and staff members surveyed on average rated their satisfaction with classroom management and student behavior as 3.64 and 3.23 respectively. Several teachers reported to the site team that behavior management was an issue, particularly with some students; the site team suggested that the school work with all constituents to develop strategies to address these concerns, such as increasing parent involvement in upper grades to “reinforce behavior standards and reward focused, on-task behavior.”

According to the team, “staff and parents report that administration has an open-door policy and that they are quick to identify and resolve issues. Teachers are open, approachable and enthusiastic.” More than nine in ten parents and all staff members surveyed reported they were satisfied with or neutral about the sense of pride students and teachers have in their school. As illustrated in Figures S1-10 and S1-12 respectively, 90% of parents and 85% of staff members surveyed reported satisfaction with the opportunities available for parent participation. Nearly three-quarters of parents surveyed were satisfied with the levels of parent involvement at 21st Century, but only 15% of staff members expressed satisfaction in this area.

Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school’s mission? The expert site visit team found that, “in 2003-04, 21st Century Charter School made several major changes in its class and curriculum organization... [which] appear to strengthen the teaching and learning process and learning experience and appear to better align with the mission to support the learning of all students.” For example, the team noted that teachers now teach multiple grades in the subject areas in which they are certified rather than teaching a single grade multiple subjects in which they perhaps do not have as much expertise. The site team reported that teaching in their areas of strength better enables teachers to support student learning and is “a positive and commendable change and should help students learn more effectively in all subjects (in support of the mission).”

The team also reported that “21st Century has in place several mechanisms for providing a successful, individualized and variably paced learning experience for every student:

- The longer school day and year provide students more time for learning;
- A+ software is used to initially assess, then place students in the appropriate grade level...;
- Teacher-led lessons are enhancing the on-line curriculum and guiding the development of core competencies;

- The extensive summer [staff] training (2-3 weeks) aligns with critical student learning needs; and
- Students progress at their own pace based on A+ mastery standards and thus children can learn at a faster pace (for their advanced/gifted students) or slower pace (for students who are behind or who have special needs)."

According to the team, the school might do more to "...emphasize student development of appropriate work habits, attitudes (self-responsibility, discipline, focus, diligence), and skills (note-taking, test taking) needed to successfully complete self-directed, on-line work." The team further suggested that 21st Century "...explore alternative classroom and staffing arrangements..." to help teachers to provide better small-group instruction and simultaneously monitor students' completion of work on-line.

Additionally, the site team reported that "evidence suggests and teachers confirm that 21st Century classes also are incorporating more project-based learning in their classes." Projects were reported to involve "...research [and] significant writing (often with feedback and revision), and were integrated with other subject areas (art, music, science, mathematics, reading)." The increased focus on project-based learning "...seem[s] to provide a better balance and fuller implementation of the curriculum that was envisioned when the charter was approved." The team suggested that the school continue to focus on implementing project-based learning to develop core competencies across grades and subjects.

Furthermore, "the school should also continue the focus on writing and have students undertake significant writing every day." The team suggested that the school "consider adopting a model for writing... and providing a consistent process, criteria, and rubric for writing to help students understand and guide the development of stronger writing skills." The team further suggested the selection or development of a "...school-wide model for core competencies (writing, speaking, listening, thinking) to provide structure and consistency for students as they develop these competencies."

Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful? The expert site visit team reported that parents "... feel adequately informed and that they have sufficient information from the school. They receive a weekly report (each Monday) and progress reports four times a year." Noting positive changes from the previous school year, the team reported that parents previously felt "... the progress report was too lengthy and complex. Parents and teachers said a new, simplified report format for progress reports has been developed. The new format was reported to be more understandable and to provide adequate information."

As shown in Figure S1-10, about nine in ten 21st Century parents reported that they were satisfied with communication from their school, such as about special activities, events, and meetings. Eighty-five percent of school staff and 78% of parents also reported they were satisfied with the information parents receive about student learning, as illustrated in Figures S1-10 and S1-12 respectively.

Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively? The expert site visit team reported that "student-adult ratios were observed to vary throughout the day" and that "teachers were observed to and reported that they struggle to effectively provide small-group instruction and to manage students who are working on [the A+ on-line curriculum]." The team suggested that the school should "...consider ways to deploy staff in ways that would reduce ratios and allow students and teachers to work more productively." The team further reported a need to "develop strategies to ensure that teachers have a manageable and sustainable work load and schedule so that the school can retain its dedicated and experienced

teachers.” Figure S1-13 shows how staff members responded to a survey about their satisfaction with professional features of their school.

Figure S1-13. Staff satisfaction with 21st Century Charter School’s professional features

School Feature	Average rate of satisfaction ¹ (5=Very Satisfied)	Satisfied ²	Neutral	Dissatisfied ³
Competitive salary structure	3.83	62%	15%	15%
Competitive benefits (e.g., health insurance, etc.)	3.31	46%	23%	31%
Work environment	4.31	100%	0%	0%
Amount of paperwork required	4.31	100%	0%	0%
Opportunities for professional development	3.15	31%	54%	15%
Evaluation or assessment of performance	3.77	62%	31%	8%
Hours spent engaged in classroom instruction ⁴	3.67	67%	22%	11%
Hours spent engaged in other activities ⁴	3.44	33%	67%	0%
Time allowed for planning and preparation ⁴	2.78	22%	22%	56%
Level of teacher autonomy in the classroom ⁴	3.67	56%	33%	11%
Level of teacher involvement in school decisions ⁴	3.78	56%	44%	0%
Teachers’ non-teaching responsibilities ⁴	3.67	56%	44%	0%
Time staff spend together discussing individual student needs ⁴	2.89	11%	56%	33%

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school staffs administered in spring 2004 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis.

Note: See Supplemental Report 8 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis.

Note: Calculations do not include missing responses. Satisfaction percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and “don’t know” responses.

¹Satisfaction rated on a scale of 1-5: 1= very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Rating calculations do not include “don’t know” responses.

²Includes “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses.

³Includes “very dissatisfied” and “dissatisfied” responses.

⁴Only staff members with instructional responsibilities responded to this question.

Detailed Description of 21st Century Charter School’s Programs and Activities

Source: The information below was provided by the school to the Mayor’s Office. It is provided here to offer a more detailed picture of the school’s programs and activities.

Mission, philosophy, and educational program

The 21st Century Charter School is dedicated to ensuring that all students show growth in character, academics, life skills, the arts, and wellness using teaching skills tailored to meet the needs of each student. The school is guided by a philosophy that each skill must be mastered before new skills can be learned; teachers thus work each student to achieve mastery of each skill in sequence before the student moves on to the next task. 21st Century offers multi-age classrooms where students are with peers within a 2-3 year age range, yet work at their individual instructional levels. At this school, students work to master skills at their own pace – no two students are ever in the same place at the same time in any subject. Technology is used to track each child’s mastery of the subject material on an ongoing basis. Each child has his or her own Individualized Learning Plan (ILP); ILP goals are reviewed by staff and students each week during advisory sessions. Parents receive weekly reports documenting the lessons their children

completed, the scores they received on assignments, and their mastery of new skills in each subject.

The computer-based A+ Learning System is used as a curriculum guide for academic material. Throughout the course of the school day, students are engaged in three types of activities in the classroom: small-group instruction with teachers as mentors and guides; academic practice and application on the computers; and independent, project-based activities.

The school is in session seven and a half hours per day for 196 days. The school's leaders believe the longer than average school day and year allow for greater student success. As the student matures, the school provides opportunities for service learning, internships, and experiences designed to prepare students for college and post-secondary education and training.

Academic programs and initiatives

- *Character Education.* All students attend character education classes two to three times per week. The character education class teaches students common values such as trust, responsibility, respect and ways to express themselves. Lessons are crafted around special learning opportunities such as Disability Awareness Month and Black History Month. To reinforce character education lessons, older students also have participated in service learning activities, such as cleaning and painting a shelter for women and children.
- *Data Tracking and Reporting.* The school uses a unique data tracking and reporting system to show academic growth on a continuous basis for each child, based on the student's completion of computer lessons and assessments. This technology provides teachers with continuous information about the areas in which each student needs assistance. Weekly progress reports are sent home to parents, documenting lessons completed and scores on assignments in each subject area. Parents are required to sign the reports and return them to the school.
- *Music.* Every student at 21st Century receives regular music lessons, learning to play the piano, percussion, guitar and bass, and also to learn vocals. Students wrote their own music and recorded it on CDs that were distributed to all the families and private donors of the school. As the school grows in coming years, it will expand its selection of musical instruments.
- *Spanish.* Basic Spanish is introduced to all students in Kindergarten. Starting in second grade, all students take Spanish classes two to three times per week.
- *Online Connections from Home.* Students can take laptop computers home from the school and work on their lessons via the Internet. Through a partnership with the school's computer vendor, a number of families have purchased below-cost refurbished desktop computers for their homes.

A third grade student at 21st Century has severe autism, is barely able to communicate verbally, and is unable to use a pencil or pen. He was home-schooled by his parents for two years, after the boy's previous school had been unable to adequately serve his educational needs. 21st Century provided this student with a full-time aide who works one-on-one with him to complete lessons. He has become an excellent speller, receiving 100% on spelling tests, and also has progressed academically in other subjects. Due to the open layout of the school and the use of computers by all students, this student with exceptional needs isn't separated from his classmates. Teachers increasingly are involving him in more group learning activities, and he has made friends during lunch and recess.

Parent involvement

- *Parent of the Year.* A 21st Century Charter School parent, Diane Gorsline, was named Parent of the Year by the Charter School Association of Indiana for her volunteer activities at the school. She arranges the school's library, volunteers two full days a week, and organizes book fairs throughout the year to increase the number of books in the school's library.
- *Parent Involvement in School Decisions.* School-wide parent participation and support were important in two major changes in academic programs at the school this year – to change the multi-age classroom groupings for older students and to shift teachers from teaching all subjects to individual subjects in which they have expertise. Prior to making these decisions the school held numerous parent meetings to discuss various options, including group sessions and one-on-one meetings.
- *Family Institute Days.* Family Institute Days are held quarterly on Saturday mornings for discussions between staff and parents regarding student achievement, understanding testing data, and learning about the use of technology at the school. At least 40% of parents participated in any given meeting.
- *Open Communication with Parents.* Parents are welcome to drop into the school at any time. Parents are in frequent contact with teachers during pick-up and drop-off times, and through email communications, the phone and regular unscheduled meetings throughout the week. This year the school had 100% parent participation in one-on-one parent-teacher meetings. The school also makes report cards and attendance data available to parents via the Internet.

Like many schools in Indianapolis, 21st Century enrolls a number of students from families living in unstable housing situations, including some who live in hotels for part of the year. Many move multiple times throughout the school year, which typically disrupts learning as students switch neighborhood schools. Since 21st Century provides transportation throughout Indianapolis, these students are able to remain in one school despite multiple moves. For example, one student moved at least three times during the last school year after his father was hospitalized and lost his job. This student experienced continuity in his education thanks to the school's transportation system and open enrollment regardless of the location of a student's home.

Supplemental programs and activities

- *Free After-School Tutoring.* The school provides after-school tutoring free of charge to all students through a partnership with the Greater Educational Opportunities Foundation Community Technology Center. Four licensed teachers lead this program, and high school and college students participate as tutors and mentors.
- *Summer Camp.* The school offers various low-cost summer camp opportunities. This summer's camp activities will include academic enhancement, music lessons, daily art classes, swimming, and health lessons.
- *Athletics.* The school's athletics program is offered in cooperation with the Police Athletic League and emphasizes participation, improvement, and character. This year the school had a basketball team, and offered track and field training and conditioning.

Community partnerships and donations

- *Reilly Foundation.* The Reilly Foundation contributed \$5,000 for the purchase of a guided-reading book series. This series includes books that are written for a range of instructional levels, allowing teachers to guide students to read progressively more difficult books.
- *Music Program.* The grandparent of one student donated \$2,500 to help the school purchase additional musical instruments, including a drum set, guitars, bass guitar, electric guitar, and keyboards.
- *Computers.* Union Planters Bank donated 10 desktop computers to the school.

-
- *Girls, Inc.* Girls, Inc. provides a nine-week hands-on economics literacy program for all girls at the school. The program runs during the school day, and teaches about banking, stocks, and bonds, as well as the importance of savings, philanthropy, and budgeting.

Staffing

- *Summer Training Camp.* Prior to the start of the school year, all teachers participate in a two-week training camp. During this time, teachers learn about the A+ curriculum and how to adapt lessons for each student's needs, receive training in the school's technology, and develop strategies for using and analyzing assessment data.
- *Weekly Staff Meetings.* Throughout the school year the entire school staff meets weekly with the school's Principal Teacher. At these meetings, staff share what they are doing in their individual classes. Some of the meetings are devoted to professional development related to the school's program and to working on the school's accountability plan.

School management

- The school's management team works together to share the responsibilities of leadership to ensure that learning is the school's top priority at all times. The school's chief executive officer (CEO), Kevin Teasley, also serves as president of the Greater Educational Opportunities (GEO) Foundation. He is responsible for the entirety of the school's operations, including academics and finances. John Hayden serves as the school's chief academic officer (CAO), and is responsible for the academic program and student information management systems, as well as all reports to the Mayor's Office, state, and federal government. The school's principal teacher, Dante Brown, monitors student academic progress, oversees classroom teachers, and parent involvement.

21st Century Charter School was created by the GEO Foundation, a non-profit educational organization focused on creating more choices in education for all children. The GEO Foundation provided financial support for the school's start-up and its management team provides oversight support for the school, community outreach support, and staff volunteers. The school's CEO and CAO are employed by the GEO Foundation – the school contracts with GEO for the portion of their time devoted to the charter school's operations.

School governance

- The Board of Directors for the 21st Century Charter School consists of local business leaders, bank professionals, university leaders and community organization leaders. The Board has expertise in banking and budgeting matters, Board development and involvement, non-profit organizational management, academic rigor and requirements, and community relations. The Board meets quarterly and is active in helping the school succeed financially, operationally, and academically by concentrating on policy and finances. The Board also monitors the academic achievement of the school's students.

Facilities

- The 21st Century Charter School is located in downtown Indianapolis in historic Union Station (a former train station). The school's open design allows individuals, with one glance, to see from one end of the school to the other. The air vents for the trains that used to come through the space are now skylights. The school space is divided into six learning studios that surround a common area, and the space also includes kitchen facilities and a large-group multi-purpose room. In the coming years, the school will add learning spaces to accommodate enrollment growth by adding new mezzanine levels within the existing space.

Planned improvements for the upcoming school year

- As the school's students progress to older grades, the school plans to further develop its community programs to offer more internships and mentorships with local business and community organizations. These students will begin performing monthly community service projects. In addition, the school plans to further develop the music programs and will begin offering art classes multiple times per week through a partnership with Very Special Arts.